



COURSE

NO: *COMM 7775*TITLE Theory and
Practice of Digital
Media**SEMESTER:** Fall 2021**MEETING DAY(S)/TIME:** Wednesdays, 5-7:10 PM**LOCATION/ROOM:** Fahy Hall 321**INSTRUCTOR:** Ruth Tsuria, PhD**EMAIL:** ruth.tsuria@shu.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 1-3 and by appointment as needed – please request appointments at least 2 days in advance so I can identify a time for us to meet; all office hours via MS Teams videoconference.

Course Delivery: Offline.**Credit Hours:** 3

Course Description

This course focuses on the definition, adoption, and applications of digital media, as well as their social and cultural impacts. The course examines the relationship between technology, society, and culture. Throughout the course we will be discussing questions like: What is digital media? How is it different from traditional media? What are the cultural and social challenges and opportunities related to digital media? Do we shape technology or does technology shape us?

This course is infused theory with practice through texts and applications. Each week we will deal with various key scholarly texts from the fields of media studies (and others), as well as consider real-world happenings. The class will be student-led, giving graduate students the opportunity to practice teaching and to engage in critical thinking. In this class, you will be asked to produce an extended research paper, which I will encourage you to submit to a media or communication conference.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Communicate current and fundamental media theories
- Read and analyze academic writings regarding media
- Produce serious research
- Acquire a vocabulary of concepts and theories integral to digital media studies
- Examine the relationship between media, culture, and social processes
- Engage critically with course theories and concepts through brief and extended written assignments
- Apply theory to practice

Course Material

No text book is assigned; online readings are assigned each week. Reading assignments will be distributed throughout the course. Individual student research is expected every week, thereby introducing additional content to the class. All materials will be posted in the Blackboard system.

Course Assignments

Participation	40%
Weekly class participation	30%
Teams report	10%
Original Research	60%
Topic and Bibliography	5%
Paper Proposal	5%
Draft(s)	10%
Oral Presentation	10%
Final Paper	20%
Research Media Product	10%

Grading Criteria (*Subjected to professor's discretion)

A (96-100)	A- (90-95)	B+ (85-89)	B (79-84)
B- (73-78)	C+ (67-72)	C (61-66)	F (0-60)

Participation (40%): A seminar cannot really function without the active participation of all members. Your engaged reading prior to class and thoughtful discussion in class will be highly valued in this course. To that end, you will engage in one-on-one close readings of the text, followed by group or class discussions in the following fashion:

1. Weekly class participation (30%) – you are expected to be present physically and mentally in all classes. In case of emergency, please inform the instructor ASAP. Each class session will involve a short lecture from the instructor, followed by small group (2 or 3, designated by the instructor) reading of the assigned text. The group will be required to create thoughtful questions or discussion points, which they will then bring back to the bigger group discussion.
2. Teams report (10%) – twice a semester, you and your groupmate will decide on a question/reading/topic that is of special interest to you. You will then spend time outside of class ‘diving into’ that topic, by finding at least two additional academic sources on the topic. Your group will then write a 1-2 page report, and present that to the class. You will need to inform the instructor one week before your report and presentation.

Original Research (60%): At the end of the semester, each student will submit a 15-20-page seminar paper. Students an original research piece, which will include a literature review, collecting empirical data, data analysis and drawing findings. Your paper should engage with course ideas but also reflect your own individual interests. You must consult with the professor before embarking on your project. To ease the process of writing, the paper is broken down into several stages:

1. Research topic and bibliography (5%): at this first stage, you will choose your general topic and review the existing academic literature related to it. Once you chosen your topic, you should begin selecting the appropriate literature (at least 10 references). By September 22nd you need to submit a short page paper which includes your research topic and rationale (up to one page), and a list of 10 or more references, with a 1-2 sentence summary for each source.
2. Paper Proposal (10%): The second stage of research includes choosing your method and material. At this point, you should review the literature and be able to more accurately describe your research question. Depending on your question, you will need to choose and describe your method and material/instrument/sample. The proposal, submitted by October 6th, should be about 5 pages long, and will include: a) research rationale, b) your specific research question, c) suggested method and sample, and d) a literature review that supports your research agenda. Remember that the purpose of a proposal is to convince the reader of the importance of your research topic, and convince them of your ability to answer your question.
3. (peer reviewed) Draft (10%): Every good paper starts with a draft. The process of writing, editing, and rewriting is a painful but important skill to hone. To aid with this

process, students will bring 2 full draft of their papers to class by November 10th. A full draft includes the research rationale (introduction), literature review, method, and findings. Those drafts will be reviewed by your fellow classmates. Based on these comments, you will submit a revised draft to the instructor on Nov. 24th. Each draft is worth 5%.

4. Final Paper (20%): Your final paper, submitted by December 15th, should incorporate the feedback you received (draft and presentations) to improve your final paper. It should be 15-20 pages (size 12 font, Time New Roman, 1 inch margins, double space), and will include: Introduction (including the research question), literature review, methods, analysis, findings, and conclusions.

5. Presentations (10%): Students will give a 10 to 12 minute presentation that includes (1) the purpose and rationale, (2) method, (3) results, and (4) implications of the research project. In addition to preparing the presentation, students are also expected to answer questions about their projects (student responses are then graded on knowledge and composure).

6. Research Media Product (10%): in addition to your oral presentation and written paper, each student will produce a digital media content presentation of their paper. This can be a blog, podcast, website, video, recorded presentation, or other original delivery system. Link to the product should be sent via email to the instructor by Dec. 15th.

Semester Timeline, Readings and Assignments

Course Dates: August 30th through December 21st, 2021

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	In Class	Assignment Due
Unit 1: Beginnings are a delicate time					
1	9/1	Intro: what is digital media?	Syllabus What Is Digital Media (from Maryville University)	Excerpts: Tsuria et al (2017); Reyna et al (2018)	
2	9/8	Hardware	<i>Film: Tyldum, The Imitation Game (2014)</i>	Excerpts: Plant (1997); A term from The Chicago School	

			Analog/digital (Mall, 2003)		
3	9/15	Software	Social Media (Boyd and Ellison, 2007) Web 1.0 versus Web 2.0 (Cormode and Krihnamurthy, 2008)	Excerpts: Benjamin (1935); racist algorithm <i>Class workshop: RQ selection</i>	
Unit 2: Theory					
4	9/22	Technological Determinism + Media Convergence	Technological determinism and new media (Hauer 2017) The cultural logic of media convergence (Jenkins 2004)	Excerpts: McLuhan (1984) <i>Class workshop: topic development</i>	Topic and Bibliography due
5	9/29	Uses and Gratifications + Participatory Culture	Uses and gratifications analysis of social media (Pelletier et al 2020) YouTube as a Participatory Culture (Chau 2010)	Excerpts: Hall (1983); Morgan (2015)	
6	10/6	Mediatization + Social Shaping of Technology	The Mediatization of Society (Hjarvard, 2008) OR Introductory essay: the social shaping of technology	Textual “sharing” – each person will explain the text they read	Proposal Due

			(MacKenzie and Wajcman, 1999)		
7	10/13	Media Effects + applying theory	Media Effects: Theory and Research (Valkenburg et al, 2016)	Video Excerpts: Bandura, O'Neil	
Unit 3: Practice					
8	10/20	Resistance	Digital Media and the Arab Spring (Howard and Hussain, 2013) WikiLeaks, Twitter, and Information Activism (Lynch, 2014)	Study: RQ	
9	10/27	Social Movements	The rhetorical functions of social media use in #BLM (Wilkins et al, 2019) #MeToo and the promise and pitfalls of challenging rape culture through digital feminist activism (Mendes et al, 2018)	Study: Lit Review	Outline due
10	11/3	Fake News	Whose dystopia is it anyway? Deepfakes and social media regulation (Yadlin and Oppenheim, 2020)	Study: Method	

			Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017)		
11	11/10	Hate Online (New tools for old ideologies)	The Discourse of Practice – Online Q&A as normalizing gender and sexual behaviors (Tsuria, 2020) The Ungovernability of Digital Hate Culture (Ganesh, 2018)	Study: Analysis	
Unit 4: To infinity and beyond!					
12	11/17	PEER REVIEW DAY			Draft Due in Class
13	11/24	NO CLASS			Drafts due to Instructor by Nov. 28 th
14	12/1	Future of digital media	TBA	Excerpts: Cancel Culture (Ng, 2020)	
15	12/8	Presentations and course wrap-up			
	12/15	FINAL PAPER + MEDIA PRODUCT SUBMISSION			

Writing Standards

Writing is an essential tool for any professional. As with any skill, writing well is the result of practice followed by feedback, and the use of relevant and appropriate sources. Therefore, the quality of writing is assessed as part of every written assignment in this course. Writing components consist of critical thinking, grammar, logic, organization, spelling, synthesis, and writing style (APA 7th ed) among others.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is highly valued at Seton Hall University. A student must always submit work that represents his or her original words or ideas. If any words or ideas are used that do not represent the student's original words or ideas, the student must cite all relevant sources. The student should also make clear the extent to which such sources were used. Words or ideas that require citations include, but are not limited to, all hardcopy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable source. At Seton Hall, all submissions to any public meeting or private mailbox fall within the scope of words and ideas that require citations if used by someone other than the original author.

Additional information about Seton Hall University and the College of Communication and the Arts plagiarism can be found at: <https://www.shu.edu/communication-arts/academic-integrity-policy.cfm>

THE COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION AND THE ARTS

The College of Communication and the Arts is a dynamic community where students, scholars, artists, theorists, critics, practitioners and professionals all thrive together. The College offers programs focusing on the 21st century digital culture that inspire and enable students to lead, create, and communicate with responsibility, passion, and excellence.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND THE ARTS – DE&I STATEMENT

The faculty of the College's Department of Communication and the Arts pledges unwavering solidarity with our administrators, staff, alumni, students, families, and all our neighboring communities, in speaking and standing firmly against racism. As educators for Newark's diocesan Catholic university, it is our moral duty to advance social justice, champion diversity, and work toward an anti-racist future, free of violence and oppression. We commit to addressing systemic inequality and strife by engaging students, colleagues, and the University community through active collaboration to improve diversity and inclusion across courses, programs, and the College.

COMMARTS ACADEMIC AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (CASE)

Functioning as the nexus for student engagement and academic administration, CommArts Academic and Student Engagement (CASE), established in Fall 2019, seeks to support prospective and current students in all aspects of their experience within the College. Specifically, CASE engages students in an array of high impact activities including, but not limited to, academic advising, experiential learning, success coaching, and professional mentorship. Additionally, CASE seeks to elevate all aspects of student success and increase student retention and persistence to graduation.

The CASE team is dedicated and available to answer any questions students may have about classes, learn about students' educational goals, prepare students for registration, and offer guidance beneficial throughout their studies. Students interested in learning more about the College of Communication and the Arts and its academic portfolio and engagement opportunities are invited to contact a CASE Director. More information is available from <http://www.shu.edu/commarts>.